

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, October 17, with transcript

Note from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Beinn Bhreagh, Sunday Oct. 17 My darling Alec,

Of course the money is yours and you must in the end spend it the way you want to. But I am not happy about the way all our accounts are managed. I never have been, because I have felt that the control was taken from me. If there were a grand settling up once a year as now,—but a quarterly rendering to me since you don't want to be bothered with them, I should feel much happier. Once a month even would not be too often for me and no business man would be content to run his business with only a yearly accounting, and it worries me terribly, it does.

Now I believe that Davidson, Manchester and Byrne are thoroughly honest men, and I am as thoroughly convinced that Bedwin is not, but I want accounts from the others just as much as from Bedwin. It is all very well to say that the accounts of all these men are open to us at any time, but they aren't in practice whatever they may be in theory. If I had the accounts sent in quarterly or monthly I would know what was being spent and could stop it if I wanted to, as it is now I can't stop things for a year. Also, suppose I suspect one of the men didn't do right in an item in Nov., then it will be Oct. of next year before I can find out if I were right or wrong and all those months the doubt is rankling and others growing, and by the time it comes to the fore it may be impossible to prove or disprove it. What I now want is to have you hold the grand annual roundup and then announce that in future you want accounts rendered monthly or quarterly, and that all vouchers must be handed in before further monies are deposited. If we do this with all the men, no one can feel aggrieved, and it will lift a load off my mind and will not interfere with your arrangement, for the roundup will still be only annually.

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Your loving wife.